



**TRABAJO DE FIN DE GRADO**

**“ANALYSIS OF L2 LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS: PHRASAL VERBS”**

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## **Index**

Abstract.....	3
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Introduction to the Cognitive approach to L2 learning.....	5
2.1 Main lines on the Cognitive approach.....	5
2.2 Second Language Learning.....	8
3. Teaching and learning methodologies.....	10
4. Teaching vocabulary cognitive-based.....	16
5. Phrasal verbs.....	18
5.1 Definition.....	18
5.2 Types of phrasal verbs.....	20
5.3 Teaching methodologies for phrasal verbs.....	21
6. A methodological proposal.....	23
6.1 Phrasal verbs with up and down.....	23
6.2 Literal and metaphorical meaning: polysemous phrasal verbs.....	26
6.2.1 Dig out.....	27
6.2.2 Shoot down.....	27
6.2.3 Make up.....	28
6.2.4 Turn down.....	29
6.2.5 Come down .....	30
7. Conclusion.....	31
8. Bibliography.....	33

## **Abstract**

Cognitivism is a science that has provided new approaches to the domain of language acquisition as well as other fields. English learners have faced several problems in order to understand some parts of the English vocabulary. In this project, we will focus on phrasal verbs and how they are taught and learnt. Phrasal verbs have been the object of study of several methodologies and approaches due to its literal and metaphorical meanings.

## **Key words**

Cognitivism, phrasal verbs, Second Language Acquisition, literal and metaphorical meaning

## **Resumen**

El cognitivismo es una rama de la ciencia que ha creado nuevos enfoques en el ámbito de la adquisición de un nuevo idioma, además de en otros campos. Los estudiantes de inglés, como segunda lengua, se han encontrado con numerosos problemas para entender algunas partes del vocabulario. En este proyecto, nos centraremos en los *phrasal verbs* y en cómo son enseñados y aprendidos. Éstos han sido objeto de estudio de muchas metodologías debido al sentido literal o metafórico que pueden adoptar.

## **Palabras clave**

Cognitivism, *phrasal verbs*, Adquisición de una Segunda Lengua, sentido literal y metafórico

## **1. Introduction**

Second Language Acquisition is a topic that has been of interest to several scientists of different approaches. When we start learning a new language which is completely opposite to our mother tongue, we are faced to a number of aspects that need to be clear in order to provide knowledge to us. English is a language that the majority of people knows but, it shows some difficult areas among which we could remark the vast range of vocabulary.

Several approaches have tried to provide a methodology that could help us to acquire the information rapidly and easily. Nonetheless, all these approaches have achieved success but, at the same time, we can find some disadvantages around them. This is the reason why this project is related to one of the most famous and revolutionary approaches which is the cognitivism. We are going to establish which are the main traits of it and we are going to link it with the goal of this study.

Referring to the goal of this work, we need to clarify that this project is about one part of English vocabulary that has been considered the most difficult one. We would study the main characteristics of phrasal verbs as well as we are going to distinguish the various ways of teaching and, above all, learning them.

The reason why we have chosen phrasal verbs as object of study is its intrinsic nature. These are a concrete part of vocabulary that does not exist in other languages and this fact makes the comprehension and the acquisition more difficult. One of their main features is that they are polysemous, so it is important to understand which is the best way of being capable of recognising all the meanings.

In order to do that, the project is divided into five parts that helps to understand the subject. Firstly, it is necessary to remark the origins of the cognitive approach, not only in linguistics but also in other sciences like psychology or philosophy, as well as introduce the topic of L2 acquisition. Then, we are going to expose the different approaches that have been used in order to teach a new language.

Once we have clarified these facts, we will analyse the way teachers introduce vocabulary in a cognitive-based way and how this new approach will help students to better comprehend the acquisition. Before delving into the object of study, we need to give the definition of phrasal verbs and expose all the characteristics and types in order to be capable of recognising them.

Our methodological proposal has been chosen to apply this information to some phrasal verbs, in this case, the ones that are formed by the particles *up* and *down* because they are used frequently. In this sense, we will establish all the meanings that these particles could have and, finally, we will look at some practical examples. The main aim is to provide enough knowledge to recognise the literal and the metaphorical meaning.

In order to accomplish all the objectives, we have read and investigated about the role of cognitivism in phrasal verbs and we have tried to apply it to our proposal in the most suitable way. Several articles have been used as well as, we have consulted English monolingual dictionaries to be sure about the meaning of the phrasal verbs.

We will expose the conclusions and we will try to facilitate the acquisition of this part of the English vocabulary to advanced learners and try to give a method that facilitates the comprehension of the several meanings that a unique phrasal verb can possess. At the end of the project, we will find the list of articles and book that have been consulted in order to provide more information in case it is required.

## **2. Introduction to the Cognitive approach to L2 learning**

### **2.1 Main lines on the Cognitive approach**

Interest in how the human mind works goes back a long way. Even before Christ, there were professionals who investigated how we store and process information. Although we do not know for sure where these interests were originated, progress has been made in discoveries that allow us to know these procedures in depth. Cognitive science is in charge of this task, that is, to demonstrate and explain the process by which human beings learn and analyse everything around us. The adjective cognitive comes from the noun cognition. The Cambridge Dictionary (2021) defines cognition as "the use of conscious mental processes". And, that is exactly what this concrete science seeks. It tries to obtain an explanation for these mental processes.

If we go back to the origins of this science, we find the philosophers who “estudiaron el problema de la cognición humana desde una perspectiva predominantemente especulativa” (Medina C., 2014: 184). It was not until the 19th century when the subject began to be explored from a scientific point of view. The cognitive scope covers a lot of different domains, as we can see its applications in psychology, linguistics and even in social sciences, given its wide magnitude of investigations that relate to the mind and learning.

Within the philosophers, it is worth mentioning the figures of Plato and Descartes for they introduced the main aspects of this science. Plato was the introducer of the concept of innate knowledge. Nevertheless, Descartes delved into this and created his own process. He highlighted rationalism which is the base of deduction. As we can observe “the concepts of introspection, deduction, and internal mental processes in these two philosophies would later influence the theoretical development of cognitive psychology” (Grider, 1993: 4).

In the wake of this, new studies affecting different domains began to emerge. One of the most affected was psychology. This science is in charge of studying the human mind and, as it is explained above, cognitive science is based on the study of mental procedures. That said, the similarities between the two are obvious. Scientists as well as psychologists set out to include everything that had been discovered within their field of work in order to establish the new parameters of psychology. The first to investigate these new concepts was the German Wilhem Wundt. Although he was not considered a cognitivist, he left traces of his research: “Though he is not considered a cognitive theorist, Wundt formulated a basis for cognitive research and development” (Grider, 1993: 5)

This was also the case of Jean Piaget, who developed new procedures but, eventually, is not classified as a cognitivist psychologist since his methodology moved away from what had been agreed upon:

Piaget's developmental theory would ultimately become distinct from cognitive psychology. Still, his thoughts contributed to cognitive mental models which are based on the concept that the mind constructs models for use in problem-solving, in complex thought, and in the anticipation of situations. Many cognitive theorists would continually build upon Piaget's ideas in their studies. (Grider, 1993: 10)

Nevertheless, one of the domains in which this approach has been introduced is linguistics. Within these studies, it is remarkable the fact that it is considered a changeable science. As it is required with almost all the technologies and studies, the characteristics and methodologies need to be renewed because there appear new breakthroughs that stir everything up. Furthermore, and as it has been explained before, the roots of the linguistic approach come from previous theories:

But a linguistic theory or a linguistic model does not grow out of nothing, it is then result of both internal developments within the discipline and of the general scientific ambience or in more general terms: of the ways of thinking at a given time. As we shall see, CL seems to be a result of two lines of thinking within linguistics: on the one hand, the insatisfaction with the results of research within Generative Grammar

(GG), which made it impossible to understand and describe in an adequate form some issues that were however considered as of great importance; on the other hand, developments in textlinguistics necessarily lead, even in the first years of this discipline, to positions now generally acknowledged as cognitive. (Bernárdez Sanchís, 1999: 12)

In this sense, it is remarkable the fact that the cognitive linguistics is related to the language itself. It is a science that cover a huge quantity of parameters but, language and learning are the most important ones. Thanks to this, it has been discovered new ways of explaining the implications of mother language as well as second language acquisition:

Cognitive Linguistics (CL) is about language, communication and cognition. They are mutually inextricable. Cognition and language create each other. Language has come to represent the world as we know it; it is grounded in our perceptual experience. Language is used to organize, process and convey information, from one person to another, from one embodied mind to another. Learning language involves determining structure from usage and this, like learning about all other aspects of the world, involves the full scope of cognition: the remembering of utterances and episodes, the categorization of experience, the determination of patterns among and between stimuli, the generalization of conceptual schema and prototypes from exemplars, and the use of cognitive models, of metaphors, analogies, and images in thinking. (Robinson & Ellis, 2008: 3)

Once we have looked sideways to the main features of cognitive linguistics, we can establish its definition and its foundations. In Centro Cervantes Virtual (s.f), cognitive linguistics is defined as a discipline that comprehend various cognitive procedures of the human mind in order to explain the linguistic knowledge. The foundation of this approach comes from 1948 where a group of mathematicians, scientists, psychologists... tried to unify the main traits of this new study:

Los antecedentes históricos de la lingüística cognitiva se remontan a un simposio celebrado en 1948 en el Instituto de Tecnología de California que reunió a psicólogos, neurofisiólogos y matemáticos interesados por comprender los mecanismos mentales relacionados con el aprendizaje en general. Sin embargo, el escaso conocimiento que en aquel momento se tenía de la mente humana, unido al hecho de que el modelo conductista entonces predominante en la psicología no tuviera suficiente capacidad explicativa para abordar el problema tratado, hicieron que los progresos de la disciplina fueran pobres en sus inicios. No fue hasta finales de los años 50 del siglo XX, con la irrupción en la lingüística de las teorías de Noam Chomsky, cuando la disciplina dio sus primeros frutos, sobre todo a partir de los años 70, debido a las observaciones provenientes del estudio de la adquisición de segundas lenguas y el surgimiento de la noción de interlengua. Paradójicamente, las teorías predominantes en la actualidad en

la lingüística cognitiva se oponen al paradigma chomskyano que impulsó sus primeros avances. (Centro Virtual Cervantes, s. f.)

Noam Chomsky is an American linguist who has introduced the fundamental concept of the cognitive theory related to linguistics. He explored the human mind and tried to look for answers that explain the origins of language, exploring the term of Universal Grammar. In this sense, he introduced new terms that clarified this new research:

Some basic properties of language are unusual among biological systems, notably the property of discrete infinity. A working hypothesis in generative grammar has been that languages are based on simple principles that interact to form often intricate structures, and that the language faculty is nonredundant, in that particular phenomena are not “overdetermined” by principles of language. (Chomsky, 1995: 154)

He is in favour of a grammar which is innate in the human beings. All people are born with some structures in our minds that let us develop them unconsciously in order to learn our mother tongue. Related to this fact, we can ask ourselves how this theory involved the learning of a second language. The second language acquisition has been studied by numerous scientist and linguistics that belongs to different approaches, but the cognitive one explores the human mind and the procedures in a much deeper way.

## **2.2 Second Language Learning**

The study of a new language is a matter that causes interest to many investigators. When we develop our mother tongue, it involves input which motivates us to put into practice the language that surrounds us. Nonetheless, when we start to learn a new language, procedures are more different. It is necessary to create or to search the input in order to acquire knowledge. Once we have established this, it is worth mentioning that there exist two opposite ways of learning: implicit learning or explicit learning.

First of all, we need to focus on implicit learning. As it is a redundancy, it is a type of learning that, in a way, it has no rules. The main example is walking. We are not conscious about the process by which we start to walk. It is the same case with language. Nevertheless, it is confusing to stipulate the main characteristics, even the definition is not clear nowadays:



The one basic theoretical issue that reigns supreme among the difficulties facing researchers concerns the definition and operationalization of implicit learning. Although it seems clear that implicit learning needs to be viewed in opposition to learning that is not implicit (often called explicit, hypothesis-driven learning), it has so far proven extremely difficult to provide a satisfactory definition of implicit learning. At least a dozen different definitions have been offered in the field. (Frensch & R nger, 2003: 16)

On the other hand, we find the explicit learning which is related to the acquisition of a new language. In this case, we know that our mind is processing new knowledge and it is our will of learning that promote it. Language is taught and we are capable of distinguishing what are the different procedures and choosing which one is the most suitable for us. By comparison, the main contradiction between both learnings is the way we receive the information and how we are exposed to the input of comprehending a new language:

Explicit learning is input processing with the conscious intention to find out whether the input information contains regularities and, if so, to work out the concepts and rules with which these regularities can be captured. Implicit learning is input processing without such an intention, taking place unconsciously. (Hulstijn, 2005: 131)

Another distinction that it is needed to make is about the mode in which learners learn a new subject, in particular a distinct tongue. Referring to this, it can be distinguished the intentional and incidental learning. As in the previous case, the meaning of these modes could be easily deduced. Even though there are some confusions when the definition is required, we can establish that:

Intentional learning refers to the learning mode in which participants are informed, prior to their engagement in a learning task, that they will be tested afterward on their retention of a particular type of information. Incidental learning refers to the mode in which participants are not forewarned of an upcoming retention test for a particular type of information. (Hulstijn, 2005: 132)

These facts help to understand the methodologies that people used in order to teach or learn a new language. During the last decades, it has been questioned the way professors teach their subject. It has been investigated how children process given information and if there exist some new procedures that make it easier. In this sense, it would be remarkable to mention the cognitive methodology in comparison with the traditional one.

### **3. Teaching and learning methodologies**

Before analysing the aim of this project, it is necessary to clarify the different methodologies that have been used and how they have developed in order to achieve a better comprehension and be capable of choosing the best way to teach depending on the needs of the students. If we pay attention to the way we have learned, we can draw a joint conclusion. We are used to attend to some theoretical classes where the teacher explains the lesson. Our duty is to memorize the given knowledge and express it in an exam. This could be considered the traditional method. Nevertheless, not all sciences can be taught in the same direction, there are some practical issues that need to be gone in depth:

From this historical perspective we are also able to see that the concerns that have prompted modern method innovations were similar to those that have always been at the centre of discussions on how to teach foreign languages. Changes in language reaching methods throughout history have reflected recognition of changes in the kind of proficiency learners need, such as a move toward oral proficiency rather than reading comprehension as the goal of language study; they have also reflected changes in theories of the nature of language and of language learning. (Richards & Rodgers, 2014: 1)

Teaching a language may seem easy but, it is a complicated matter that requires attention. That is the reason why we could find different methodologies throughout decades that try to analyse which method and procedures are the most suitable. If we take a look to the traditional methodologies, we could remark the Grammar-Translation Method which is defined as:

Grammar Translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language. It hence views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. (Richards & Rodgers, 2014: 3)

It is considered the commonest method for it has been used during decades as “Grammar Translation dominated European and foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s, and in modified form it continues to be widely used in some parts of the world today” (Richards & Rodgers, 2014: 4). It is a way of relating your mother language with a complete new one. This lets students make a reflection by comparing the two languages and reach a considerable conclusion.

Having said that, this methodology was questioned during the 19th century because of oral competence. It is a procedure that focuses on the written part and neglects oral practice. When we learn a new language, one of the fundamental parts of it is to know how to communicate. This is why new methods are being investigated which pay attention to the use of the language. “In Germany, England, France, and other parts of Europe, new approaches to language teaching were developed by individual language teaching specialists, each with a specific method for reforming the teaching of modern languages” (Richards & Rodgers, 2014: 5).

It started a revolution in which the linguistics obtained a certain relevance as well as the reformers tried to establish some new principles. One of the most important rules that they imposed was the necessity of paying attention to the oral language because it is the tool that permit us to develop our knowledge about a language in a quotidian situation. These ideas were the key for the appearance of new methodologies:

These principles provided the theoretical foundations for a principled approach to language teaching, one based on a scientific approach to the study of a language and of language learning. They reflect the beginnings of the discipline of applied linguistics —that branch of language study concerned with the scientific study of second and foreign language teaching and learning. (Richards & Rodgers, 2014: 8).

In this context, it appeared a new method that revolutionized the perspective that people had about learning. This is the Direct Method. It was born due to the necessity of knowing how people start to talk. Many scientists were looking for answers in order to establish a methodology that facilitates the learning process:

Other reformers toward the end of the century likewise turned their attention to naturalistic principles of language learning, and for this reason they are sometimes referred to as advocates of a “natural” method. In fact at various times throughout the history of language teaching, attempts have been made to make second language learning more like first language learning. (Richards & Rodgers, 2014: 9)

They thought that if the new procedure is similar to the one that permit us to talk our mother tongue, the learners will find it much easier. In this sense, the Natural Method came out which was a previous aspect of the Direct Method. It was supported by a huge number of investigators and “other believers in the Natural Method argued that a foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner’s native tongue if meaning was conveyed

directly through demonstration and action” (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 9). With the introduction of this conception, the Natural Method established its rules, which were:

1. Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language.
2. Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught.
3. Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes.
4. Grammar was taught inductively.
5. New teaching points were introduced orally.
6. Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas.
7. Both speech and listening comprehension were taught.
8. Correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized. (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 9-10)

Even the principles that were exposed were clear enough and they seemed to be an advance in teaching, there were certain negative points that surrounded this procedure:

But despite pressure from proponents of the method, it was difficult to implement in public secondary school education. It overemphasized and distorted the similarities between naturalistic first language learning and classroom foreign language learning and failed to consider the practical realities of the classroom. In addition, it lacked a rigorous basis in applied linguistic theory, and for this reason it was often criticized by the more academically based proponents of the Reform Movement. (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 10)

That was one of the reasons why this methodology was doubted. Besides, it was difficult to introduce these principles due to the necessity of the teacher’s training. This was a breakthrough and the majority of language teachers were not used to this kind of process. Scientists and linguistic wanted to make an agreement and, in order to accomplish this task, it was necessary to clarify some new terms that have been inserted during these decades. Before continuing with the different methods, it is worth mentioning the difference between approach, method and technique:

Approach: This level influences the way in which practitioners orient themselves towards all aspects of their work. [...]

Method: This level refers to the organisational patterns or practice protocol used both to set forth and bring forth aspects of the approach. [...]

Technique: This level refers to those specific activities practised by users of the approach that can be observed and even "counted" by an observer of the activity. (Burnham, 1999: 4-5)

Once we have exposed the main definitions, we can persist in the analysis of the methodologies. During the 1920s, British linguists developed a new approach which was called the Oral Approach or Situational Language Teaching. This was a completely new idea that has not to do with the previous one, the Direct Method. Following the information given by Richard & Rodgers (2014), this approach is characterized by the succeeding traits:

1. Language teaching begins with the spoken language. Material is taught orally before it is presented in written form.
  2. The target language is the language of the classroom.
  3. New language points are introduced and practiced situationally.
  4. Vocabulary selection procedures are followed to ensure that an essential general service vocabulary is covered.
  5. Items of grammar are graded following the principle that simple forms should be taught before complex ones.
  6. Reading and writing are introduced once a sufficient lexical and grammatical basis is established.
- (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 34)

This is an approach that involved all the disciplines required in order to learn a language. If we make a comparison with the previous method, we could state that it shared some characteristics with the Direct Method, but nevertheless, this approach award teachers the possibility of going deeper in the different parts. It has been considered a suitable method and because of this characteristic, it has been able to maintain its prestige for many years, especially in English educational institutions: “But because the principles of Situational Language Teaching, with its strong emphasis on oral practice, grammar, and sentence pattern, conform to the intuitions of many practically oriented classrooms teachers, it continues to be widely used in the 1980s” (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 42)

Another method that needs to be explained is the Audiolingual Method. It was born thanks to “the increased attention given to foreign language teaching in the United States toward the end of the 1950s” (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 47). Numerous teachers learn the new procedures and innovations in order to be better professionals. It is a methodology that pays also attention to the oral skills but, in this case, we need to repeat and reinforce the data which is given to us.

In Audiolingualism, as in Situational Language Teaching, the teacher's role is central and active; it is a teacher-dominated method. The teacher models the target language, controls the direction and pace of learning, and monitors and corrects the learner's performance. The teacher must keep the learners attentive by varying drills and tasks and choosing relevant situations to practice structures. (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 56)

It is based in Behaviourism and this theory considered that "language is verbal behaviour— that is, the automatic production and comprehension of utterances— and can be learned by inducing the students to do likewise" (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 51). Taking it into account, the Audio-Lingual Method was formed and it revolutionized the learning world. Nonetheless, Noam Chomsky proposed a different theory that provoked the decline of this method. "His theories were to revolutionize American linguistics and focus the attention of linguists and psychologists on the mental properties people bring to bear on language use and language learning" (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 59).

These new ideas meant a crisis for the American language teaching because they were developed and scientifically proved and suddenly, all knowledge were confused and Chomsky's theories started to cause a new different way of thinking and explaining how we started to talk.

Following with this, it is required to mention the Communicative Language Teaching method (CLT). This theory was born due to the new discoveries made by Noam Chomsky. What has been introduced by him was only the beginning of a linguistic theory that applied for all domains. The previous methods contained several inconvenient points that needed to be modified. That is why, in this context, a new approach that was formed by the recent developments is born.

Although the movement began as a largely British innovation, focusing on alternative conceptions of a syllabus, since the mid-1970s the scope of Communicative Language Teaching has expended. Both American and British proponents now see it as an approach (and not a method) that aims to (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the independence of language and communication. (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 66)

It is an approach that tried to cover all the aspects which form a language. Its will of achieving success in all the skills was the key for creating interest. Taking into account the intentions written before, we could state the following characteristics:

1. Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
2. The primary function of language is for interaction and communication.
3. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
4. The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse. (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 71)

Regardless the main characteristics and the great reception that this approach had, it suffered a decline but, in a way, it has maintained its reputation thanks to the different and varied points that it suggested. According to Richard & Rodgers (2014), it is considered a humanistic approach in which we could find how the interactive processes possessed a great importance. The communicative function obtained the needed priority without putting the rest of skills aside.

Within the variety of methodologies, we are going to choose one more approach that it is considered one of the most important ones. In this sense, we are going to analyse the Silent Way. This method was created by Caleb Gattegno “The Silent Way represents Gattegno’s venture into the field of foreign language teaching. It is based on the premise that the teacher should be silent as much as possible in the classroom and the learner should be encouraged to produce as much language as possible” (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 99).

This method wanted to provide students the capacity of developing the target language. It required concentration and, obviously, it followed a quotidian pattern as all the methodologies. Nevertheless, in this case, students had the power and the voice because they needed to talk independently of the teacher. Even though, it was a revolutionary discovery, it has not received enough recognition.

The innovations in Gattegno’s method derive primarily from the manner in which classroom activities are organized, the indirect role the teacher is required to assume in directing and monitoring learner performance, the responsibility placed upon learners to figure out and test their hypotheses about how the language works, and the materials used to elicit and practice language. (Richard & Rodgers, 2014: 111)

After analysing the most recognisable methodologies, we are going to focus our attention to the vocabulary skills and how it is taught in a cognitive way because our object of study is phrasal verbs and they take part within the vocabulary issue. We have investigated how language is taught and the pros and cons of each method for being capable of distinguishing which one is the most suitable.

#### **4. Teaching vocabulary cognitive-based**

When we decide to learn a new language, we are exposed to different skills. As we have explained before, it is necessary to dominate all of them in order to be capable of knowing the language itself. Even though most of the methodologies that we have exposed above focus on the speaking skill, vocabulary is important due to the fact that it provides the words. Without vocabulary, we could not even formulate a sentence. That is why scientist and linguists have been interested in how we teach such an important part of a language.

Although there were some syllabi and approaches that mainly focused on words and lexis during 1990s; no method had existed with a strong pillar of vocabulary blocks until then. Before 1990s, many explored vocabulary learning separately without any motive to shape a method with a main emphasis on word learning. But all these trends have not still drawn a richly colored guiding line in the complicated picture of word learning and retrieval. Works for enhancing the retention of words and facilitating the vocabulary learning was kept on in 1980s with more motive and zeal. Also this effort was strengthened by the emergence of learning strategies and had shaped a new era in vocabulary learning. (Banisaeid, 2013: 109)

Within this subject, we could find a strategy that permist us to understand the procedures of this kind of teaching. It is called Cognitive Vocabulary Strategies Approach to Word Learning (CVA):

The Cognitive Vocabulary Approach (CVA) is grounded in what we know about vocabulary and comprehension and focuses on explicit instruction of not only new word meanings but also on a metacognitive direction intended to help students develop independent word learning strategies that will serve them well in subsequent encounters with unfamiliar words. (Harmon & Wood, 2010: 101)

If we delve more deeply into this approach, we could discover that it is formed by three important aspects which are “identifying unfamiliar words, examining word meanings, and



relating word meanings” (Harmon & Wood, 2010: 101). First of all, identifying unfamiliar words is a task that not all students are capable of achieving. When we are reading a text in a foreign language, there are always some words that are unfamiliar for us. It is in this moment when we need to be attentive to them.

Accomplishing this seemingly simple and straightforward task of identifying unknown words actually involves a level of metacognitive awareness that many struggling adolescent readers lack. Therefore, we need to help students consider these questions as they read material: What does it mean to acknowledge unfamiliar words? Why is it important to identify unfamiliar words that may be important? When do unfamiliar words need to be identified? What makes an unfamiliar word important? (Harmon & Wood, 2010: 101)

The cognitive strategies in this facet are the capacity of determining the importance of the words in a text and being capable of recognising unfamiliar words. Regarding to the questions exposed above in the quotation, we could think that these questions might be simple, but there are students that have not developed the metacognitive awareness and this simple task could become a difficult one. The role of the teacher is to introduce these questions that facilitate the assignment and promote a reaction into the students.

The next facet is examining word meaning which is an essential step for it provides enough meaning in order to understand the unfamiliar word. According to Harmon & Wood (2010), it is not a procedure for unfamiliar words but also, it serves to guess unfamiliar meanings of familiar words. As every English student knows, the majority of words in English possesses various meanings and some of them are not renowned. Therefore, this facet helps students in different ways.

In closely examining word meanings, students use several cognitive strategies that are the bedrock of comprehension. The strategies —which include activating prior knowledge, predicting, inferring, questioning, and drawing conclusions— enable students to grapple with the plausible meanings of the targeted words. (Harmon & Wood, 2010: 101)

In this sense, students use the language itself in order to find the answers for their doubts. This method proportionate independence and it encourages the student to continue learning. Instead of memorising all the meanings, they investigate and create a certain play with the target

language that triggers the knowledge. The mental process is significative; teachers are conscious about the variety of students and not all of them learn at the same time. That is why teachers can promote a change with the help of questions that make students reflect about what they know.

Finally, the last facet that we have mentioned is relating word meanings. Once students recognize the meaning of the unfamiliar word, teachers need to help them to interiorize it as they need to learn when and how use this new word and this new meaning.

In other words, we must help students learn how the words work: in what situations, by whom, and in relation to what concepts. From a cognitive perspective, these activities require students to make connections, classify and categorize information, and visualize—all higher-level cognitive strategies that aid in comprehension. (Harmon & Wood, 2010: 102)

This facet allows students to visualize the word as it would be an image. They imagine their meaning and they think about the relations with other words. This approach that might seem to be revolutionary has signified an improvement in teaching vocabulary because it combines cognitive ways and promote the independence of students. It covers not only vocabulary, but also it requires a deep knowledge of the other skills. Students practice all aspects of the target language during the process of acquiring new unfamiliar words.

## **5. Phrasal verbs**

Before starting analysing the phrasal verbs in a much more concrete context, it is necessary to clarify and delve deeper into the definition and all the characteristics of them to better comprehend the significance of this essential part of English.

### **5.1 Definition**

The definition of phrasal verb might seem easy to determinate. Nevertheless, numerous scientists and linguists have tried to establish the main characteristics that formed them and how it is the best way of teaching them. In order to understand the difficulty of this English term, we need to make the definition clear: “The phrasal verb is generally defined as a verb +

particle combination that functions as a single verb, both parts giving up meaning in order to form a new lexical item” (Darwin & Gray, 1999: 65). This particle could be a preposition, an adverb or even both of them together.

Even it is thought that phrasal verbs are unique of English, some studies have discovered that these particles have a different origin. Within the Germanic languages, we find that German possesses a similar particle that could be compared to phrasal verbs.

The most obvious parallels can be found in other Germanic languages. [...] present-day German *aufgeben* ‘give up’, which, like its English translation, consists of a particle (*auf*, cognate to *up*) and a verb (*geben*, cognate to *give*):

(1) Present-day German

*Alexander gab das Cellospielen auf*

Alexander gave the cello:playing up

‘Alexander gave up playing the cello

But neither syntactically nor semantically are there always one-to-one correspondences. [...] the German verb *aufmachen* ‘open’ (particle *auf* and verb *machen*, cognate to *make*) (Thim, 2012: 3-4).

German examples are an accurate possibility, but it is necessary to highlight the fact that they are not exactly similar to English phrasal verbs. Particles are always located after the verb, there is no possibility to find them before in Modern English. This fact was different when Old English dominated. That is the reason why it could be confusing to find the difference between German and English. Phrasal verbs have become a target for many students and linguist because of its complexity.

This reticence of using and understanding them is found in students whose mother tongue is completely different from English. These languages do not have anything similar to phrasal verbs and when we try to translate them into this concrete tongue, we find some difficulties, above all, if we take into account the fact that English language evolves and creates new ones:

This seems to be true especially for learners who lack phrasal verbs in their mother tongue, such as Romanian speaking students, and Spanish speaking students. These learners tend to use fewer phrasal verbs and more single word verbs than native speakers performing similar tasks. However, they are common in spoken and written English and even new ones are constantly being created. In that case, we

have found it necessary and important to show that phrasal verbs are difficult to understand only because foreign learners of English do not usually notice that their meanings clearly go from the concrete to the abstract. (Neagu, 2007: 122)

One of the main traits of them is that some of them has polysemous meanings, that is to say, we observe that one phrasal verb can have two or more meanings: “phrasal verbs are often polysemous and they give a new meaning a new meaning each time they are used in a different context” (Al-Otaibi, 2019: 10). This fact is considered a complication because it hinders the learning process as students need to be attentive to the various meanings and chose the most suitable one depending on the context that the phrasal verb is found.

Another characteristic that is essential to remark is the different types of phrasal verbs that there exist. Perhaps these types could be analysed as if they were a simple aspect, but it could help us to determinate the range of phrasal verbs and understand correctly the practical example that we are going to expose after.

## **5.2 Types of phrasal verbs**

We could organize the phrasal verbs into different perspectives. First of all, we could divide them into three types within the semantic classification: compositional constructions, aspectual and idiomatic constructions. If we focus on the former one, we could state that “the verb combines with a directional particle and the whole construction is transparent from the meaning of its constituents” (Thim, 2012: 14). This type is considered to be the easiest one to translate because it does not change the meaning, for example, *come in* or *carry out*.

On the other hand, we have the aspectual constructions that could be defined as “a subgroup of the compositional constructions, since their meaning is usually fully transparent and readily understandable ad hoc formations are possible [...] the particles in these constructions are not directional but aspectual” (Thim, 2012: 16-17). Particles are used to emphasize the meaning of verb and, in way, could be redundant, such as *fill up* or *play on*.

The last semantic group is the idiomatic constructions. They are considered to be the most difficult ones and, they catch the attention of students and linguists due to its conditions.

Thim defined them as “the idiomatic constructions are different from the two preceding groups in that their meaning cannot be inferred from the meaning of their elements: they belong, quite unambiguously, to the lexicon” (2012: 19). If we try to analyse both particles, it is impossible to know its meaning. That is the reason why this type is the most interesting one. Some examples of this type are: *give up* or *give in to*.

As we have explained, these types belong to the semantic trait, but it is worth mentioning the syntactic characteristics even though, they are quite obvious. The phrasal verbs can be transitive, intransitive, separable or inseparable. The first two types depend on if they accept or not a direct object. If a phrasal verb accepts a direct object, then it is a transitive one. Regarding to the last two types, we need to take into account the other characteristics. “When this type of phrasal verb has a direct object, we can usually separate the two parts. For example, “turn down” is separable. We can say: “turn down my offer” or “turn my offer down”. Most of the times, we could find this information in a dictionary and this helps us to understand when a phrasal verb is separable or not.

Once we have clearly explained the main types of phrasal verbs, we need to delve into the different ways of teaching them in order to choose the most appropriate one. This English item has been investigated during decades with the aim of finding an easy method for Second Language Acquisition. As we have said, this part of the vocabulary is not found in other languages and linguists and teachers have tried to discover a method that make the comprehension easier.

### **5.3 Teaching methodologies for phrasal verbs**

In this part of the project, we are going to expose the different methodologies that have been used to teach phrasal verbs to non-native English speakers. Firstly, we will mention the different methods but, we will focus our attention to the cognitive one. The most common way of teaching them is memorizing. It is not the most suitable one because it does not provide the reasons why a phrasal verb is used in a concrete context, that is to say, they know the meaning of them but they are not conscious about the context in which they can use them. Students learn by heart a list of them but, actually, they do not know how to use them.

Traditional grammarians have always defended a concrete way of teaching them:

[...] generally assume that phrasal verbs are an arbitrary combination of a verb and one or more particles. They regard them simply as a matter of language, and mainly characterise their syntactic properties. Whenever they characterise their meanings, they usually point out the spatial and aspectual meanings of the particles. In this view, linguistic meaning is divorced from the human conceptual system. (Kovács, 2007: 143)

This methodology does not delve into the real meaning of the phrasal verb and students figure out the meaning separately, that is to say, paying attention to the verb and to the particle in different aspects, as they were different subparts instead of being one. It resumes that the study of these words needs to be mechanic: “conventional teaching methods suggest that phrasal verbs should be learnt mechanically and that any conceptual analysis of such constructions is futile” (Al-Otaibi, 2019: 11).

The cognitive linguistics has tried to adapt a methodology that comprehend and understand the role of the phrasal verb as a whole. They investigated the meaning of them in order to formulize a rule that establish what is the best way of learning them without memorizing. The first feature that we can remark is “that the meanings of phrasal verbs also go easily from the concrete to the abstract, and metaphors serve as a link between them” (Kovács, 2007: 146). What Kovács (2007) wanted to explain is that phrasal verbs are similar to metaphors and, if we are capable of understanding the metaphor within its meaning, the lesson will be easier. Some phrasal verbs are entirely metaphors:

For example, to breeze in means to enter a place confidently, without seeming to care what other people think: perhaps the attitude and action reminds us of the movement of a breeze. Similarly, to rope someone in means to persuade someone to do something that they do not really want to do: perhaps it reminds us of the way in which people use ropes to catch animals or to collect them together. (Kovács, 2007, 146-147)

In this sense, students will understand the meaning of the phrasal verbs by relating them with the common meaning. We could use new phrasal verbs and even, be capable of explaining its sense. This cognitive approach has been a useful discovery and teachers have used it in order to help their students. “The recognition of the link between the literal and idiomatic of particles

via metaphors has been a major contribution of cognitive linguistics to a better understanding of the meanings of phrasal verbs” (Kovács, 2007: 147). It is important to remember that the cognitive approach is valid for idiomatic constructions where the meaning of the phrasal verb is hidden.

Once we have understood how this approach works, we are going to put it into practice with phrasal verbs that are formed by *up* and *down*. We will try to figure out their metaphorical meaning and analyse the best way of explaining it to non-native English speakers.

## **6. A methodological proposal**

### **6.1 Phrasal verbs with *up* and *down***

These particles *up* and *down* are considered to be ones of the most frequent particles because of their meaning. Regarding, firstly, to *up*, “its frequency can be explained by the fact that an upward position or motion, both physical and especially abstract, is in a very special way part of our daily experience” (Neagu, 2007: 132). This particle refers to the space in which the action is developed. It helps us to orientate something or someone: “the basic prepositions of orientation in English are: UP-DOWN, OVER-UNDER, ABOVE-BELOW and FRONT-BACK, BEFORE-BEHIND” (Neagu, 2007: 132).

It is required to explain how this particle is used and how its meaning is extended. In this sense, the common sense of *up* is spatial, that is to say, it is used to say something about the physical space of something or someone:

UP means motion from a lower to a higher place. However, *up* may also refer to situations where there is no real change of place (e.g. *Where is David? He must be up in his room* where *up* means ‘on a higher floor’). *Up* shows that the position of the object mentioned is higher than others (*Our department room is two floors up*) or it changes from a horizontal to a vertical position (*Is Jane still sleeping? No, she has been up for an hour*). (Neagu, 2007: 132)

These are the common uses of *up* which are easily comprehensible due to the sense of the particle. When a phrasal verb with *up* means an ascendent movement or place the action in an upper place, the explanation is not difficult. In these cases, the constructions are conceptual

because we can establish the meaning of the phrasal verbs thanks to the definition of the particle and the verb. Nonetheless, this particle possesses some extended meaning that can complicate the formation and understanding of various phrasal verbs.

The first extended sense that we are going to take a look is “the notion of approach, meaning ‘aiming at or reaching a goal, an end, a limit’” (Neagu, 2007: 132). In this sense, it is required to make a comparison between ‘ascend in order to achieve something’ and the particle *up*. Some of the phrasal verbs that use this particle in this sense are: *hurry up*, *run up*, *walk up*, *link up* or *read up*. The cognitive approach gives an explanation to this link and helps students to better understand why we use this particle instead of another one.

In cognitive linguistic literature, which places great emphasis on explaining usages, this derived sense has been accounted for in the following way: as we approach an entity such that it gets closer to us, it comes to distend a larger area of the retina. This causes the ocular experience of entities which are approaching or which we are approaching to appear to move up in our visual field. That is, this situation relates to motion along the horizontal, not the vertical axis. (Neagu, 2007: 133)

We are capable of establishing the relation between both meanings and that facilitates the comprehension as well as it gives student the possibility of using new vocabulary in the foreign language. If we continue exploring the extended senses of *up*, we find that it is related to the positive evaluation of things. It is considered by society that if something is placed in an upward location, this means that this thing is good, beautiful or positive. This sense is exemplified with the following phrasal verbs: *brush up*, *cheer up*, *perk up* or *build up*.

Following with this idea, *up* is also used to make a distinction within the different ranges of superiority. It exists a contradiction with its opposite, that is to say, with *down* which serves to remark a low position.

*Up* is also used for more important and higher in rank, as in *She’s getting up in the world* (i.e. doing better and better in her career, socially, etc.) *She’s been talking up her job* (i.e. saying how good it is) and *We went up to London* (a usage which derives from the consensus that London is the most important/highest ranking place in the land). *Down* is used to denote ‘low in value, low in status, not working, defunct’ as in *House prices went down*. (Neagu, 2007: 133)



Furthermore, another sense of the particle is related to visibility, for example, the phrasal verbs such as *show up*, *bring up* or *turn up*. We use them in order to reflect that something or someone appears or that we discover something new. It is a way of reinforcing the fact that *up* serves to highlight the visibility. This particle causes some confusion due to the fact that it can be added to some verbs. Students do not distinguish when it has to do with a phrasal verb or when it is only a way of being redundant.

On the other side, we have the particle *down*, which is also one of the most used particles referring to phrasal verbs. It has the opposite meaning of *up* but, even though it could be obvious, we are going to remark the different senses that this particle could adopt. The first sense that we could remark is the “movement from a higher to a lower place” (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 104). It is completely the opposite of *up* for it means to descend to a lower place while *up* means to ascend. Some examples of this fact are *go down*, *sit down*, *keep down* or *lie down*.

Down often indicates that an object has been displaced or that it has moved from a higher to a lower place. Sometimes, however, the place as such does not change; what changes is the position of the given object, from vertical to horizontal. In this case, think of trees that are being cut down – the space they occupy remains more or less the same, but once they are cut, their position has changed from vertical to horizontal. (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 105)

The movement of the object can refer to the position of the complete object or, by the contrary, only of a part of it. As it has been explained, usually, this movement described the change of its positions (vertical/ horizontal) instead of a huge alteration. Besides, another sense of this particle is related to time and geography motion:

Down has many metaphorical uses, two of which concern: (a) time (viewed as a surface), with often a point in time later than some other point/period. [...] (b) the geographic orientation of an object or place. More specifically, down is used when the object moves to the south or is located south of a given place. (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 106)

It seems to correspond with its common meaning as it indicates a lower position even if it has not to do with the physical one. Following with this idea, *down* can refer to a decrease in value or intensity. It “can be associated with differences in volume, temperature, weight, prices, emotions, one’s sense of importance or respectability, social relations, power and many other

abstract domains” (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 107). Within this sense, we could highlight these examples: *turn down*, *calm down*, *talk down to*...

Another sense of the particle down has to do with one sense of *up*. As it has been explained before, *up* is used sometimes to describe when a goal is achieved or when we reach an objective. In this sense: “Several verbs + up convey the meaning of intensity, completeness of action, i.e. reaching the goal, the highest limit; in the same way many verbs with down also stress completion, but this time the lowest limit on the scale of degree, value, measure, etc” (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 107). We need to be careful in order to understand which is the meaning of both uses. To clarify this sense, these are some examples such as *close down* (closure of an enterprise), *hammer down* (to sell something in an auction) or *strike down* (invalidate a law). These phrasal verbs complete an action and achieve a goal but not necessarily in the positive way for the finished action can refer to a negative process that has already done.

Furthermore, *down* also refers to the action of eating and writing. This sense is practically clear due to the fact that “Taking into account the downward movement which accompanies eating and writing, it is no surprise that many of the verbs expressing these activities contain the particle down” (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003: 112). It seems to be easy to understand and give an explanation within all the senses that this particle has. When something is reasonable, students can use the phrasal verbs and they feel much more confident instead of not using them. For instance, some of them are *write down*, *swallow down*, *note (something) down* or *gulped down*.

We have exposed all the meanings and senses that both particles can have. Nonetheless, our next step would be to remark these phrasal verbs which mean different things. As we have said, most of the phrasal verbs are polysemous and this characteristic can create a sort of difficulty within the acquisition of new vocabulary.

## **6.2 Literal and metaphorical meaning: polysemous phrasal verbs**

Polysemy is the most challenging characteristic of phrasal verbs. Even when we think that we understand the meaning and how to use them, we discover that only one phrasal verb can mean several things, even opposite ones. That is the reason why we are going to analyse some phrasal verbs that are formed by *up* and by *down* and their meanings in order to provide

some justifications. We have chosen some phrasal verbs that are commonly used in learning acquisition.

First of all, we need to remark that this information and the different meanings of the phrasal verbs are recommended to advanced learners of English. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) establishes that these are students who have achieved B2 or C1 level exams. The reason why we have said that is because in these cases, students have more knowledge and are capable of understanding metaphorical meanings because they have already acquired the literal one.

### **6.2.1 Dig up**

The first phrasal verb that we are going to take a look at is to *dig up*. Its literal meaning has to do with the action of taking something out from the ground. The example that Eva Kovács gives is clear: “The dog *dug up* an old bone” (2007: 146), whereas she proposed another example which is “We *dug up* some interesting facts” (2007: 146). We could appreciate the relation between both sentences as they share an intrinsic sense of discovering something.

[...] the first phrasal verb has a literal meaning and refers to a physical action, while the second is a metaphorical and describes an action that is similar in some way to the first. For example, when someone *digs up* information, they discover it, and the process seems similar to the way in which dogs find bones that have been buried in the ground. (Kovács, 2007: 146)

### **6.2.2 Shoot down**

A similar example of it is the phrasal verb to *shoot down*. Kovács proposed these two examples that permit us to explain the relationship between the literal meaning and the metaphorical one: “Two planes were *shot down* / Each proposal was *shot down*” (2007: 146). In this case, we understand that the literal meaning of this phrasal verb is to demolish something, whereas, if we analyse the meaning of the second sentence, we could figure out that the action is the same but the object in which reside the action is the difference. While in the first sentence it is an object, in the second one, we are faced to an abstract one. Nevertheless, the meaning of the phrasal verb is considered the same.

### 6.2.3 Make up

Furthermore, we are going to continue with a phrasal verb formed by *up* and that it could be considered one of the most common phrasal verbs. It is the case of *to make up*. These are the dictionary entries with an example:

1. to invent something (a lie, reason, excuse, etc.) → “If you don’t want to go to the party, why don’t you make up an excuse?”
2. to compose or constitute → “iPhone sales make up the majority of Apple’s revenue.”
3. to no longer be mad at someone after an argument or disagreement → “Keith was fighting with his girlfriend, but they have since made up.”
4. to compensate for something (such as neglect, a mistake, on omission, etc.) → “I get an additional three vacation days to make up for having to work on Christmas.” (Jones, s. f.)

In these examples, we can find a link that relates all of them. First, the first entry is related to the idea of creating an excuse or a lie in order to achieve something. This has to do with the noun make-up which is used to cover our faces with some cosmetic products. It is a way of hiding our real face. In this sense, it is the same objective but, the particle *up* is the one that gives the approach of the goal.

The second entry is related to the *up*’s sense of superiority because it places something at the top, which is the case of the given example. In a way, it is a sort of goal that is achieved and permit us to understand the significance of this phrasal verb with the previous one because iPhone has achieved the popularity within the brand Apple. The third meaning is a synonym of forgiveness. Up, in this example, exemplified positiveness as they have stopped fighting and they have reached an agreement.

Finally, the last example is also related with the other ones because it is the result of achieving something. As the person has worked too much, she or he has achieved some holidays. It is a compensation and, at the same time, something positive and good for him or

her. In the four cases, up has a sense of positive and superiority for the result of the action is a good consequence for the narrator.

#### 6.2.4 Turn down

The next phrasal verb that we are going to analyse is formed by the particle *down* which is *to turn down*. This one does not have several senses but we can highlight two meanings:

1. to reduce the intensity of something → “Could you please turn the music down? I’m trying to study.”
2. to reject an offer or request → “Why did you turn down the job? I thought you said it was perfect for you.” (Jones, s. f.)

These examples are easy to understand. The first sense is strictly linked to the value of *down* which is the decrease of intensity or value. On the other hand, the second example could be considered to be more metaphorical. In this case, we have reached an objective but in a negative way. The decision that the narrator has made is totally negative and *down* reinforces this idea. Nonetheless, both senses possess the intrinsic characteristic of the particle which is the negative point or aspect.

Following with this example, it is curious to observe the different meanings that the phrasal verb which is formed by the opposite particle: *to turn up*. These are the most remarkable meanings:

1. to increase the intensity of something → “Turn it up! This is my song.”
2. to arrive unexpectedly → “You won’t believe who turned up to the party.”
3. to be found after being lost → “I can’t find my favorite pair of jeans. I hope they turn up somewhere.” (Jones, s. f.)

In the first sense, we could appreciate the increase of intensity or value. It is the opposite situation regarding the first example of *turn down*. This is the perfect case to assume the

differences between both particle and how, at the same time, they complement each other. If we take a look at the second example, we could explain that the particle *up* is used to improve the visibility of someone. It is one of the senses that this particle can adopt and it is also related to the first one. If we increase the value or the intensity of something, we increase its visibility.

The last example is linked to the second one, because it has to do with find something and to make it visible for someone who has lost it. Even if the phrasal verbs have several meanings, all of them are connected to each other. This information facilitates the understanding and comprehension of both phrasal verbs.

### 6.2.5 Come down

Finally, we are going to analyse the different meanings that *come down* could mean. These are the entries with an example that make the comprehension easier:

1. to move down to the ground or to a lower level → He was sitting in a tree and refused to *come down*.
2. to become less in amount, level, price etc → Interest rates have *come down* significantly in the last three years.
3. to travel to a place that is further south or is smaller or less important than the place you are leaving → My parents are *coming down* for the weekend.
4. to make a decision that supports or opposes someone or something → Everything depends on which side the judge *comes down* on.

come down in favour of/against: The council *came down* in favour of closing the road.

5. to continue to exist from a long time ago

come down to: the version of the story that has *come down to* us

6. to be long or deep enough to reach a particular lower point or level

come down to/as far as: The jacket *came down* almost to his knees. (Macmillan Dictionary Come Down, s. f.)

If we pay attention to all these entries, we can reach an agreement between all of them because the particle down is the one that links the senses. In the first example, we could observe that it is the most common sense of down which is the movement to a lower place from a higher one. While in the second example, we could argue that it is a much more metaphorical sense for it has to do with the decrease of value or intensity and this is something that is considered to be abstract.

The third and sixth examples are related to the sense of descension in a much more geographically way because it is supposed to go down to a lower place. This place could be a country or city or just a part of a house. The metaphor resides in the way the movement is descendent. On the other side, the fourth and fifth senses are metaphorical because of they do not refer to a movement itself but, they refer to an action which is performed or completed. It has to do with the reach of a goal.

We have done a research of the common phrasal verbs and investigate about the relation between all senses that a unique phrasal verb possesses. It is necessary to remark the fact that there are many phrasal verbs that can be analysed but, we have decided to choose some of them in order to provide an evidence on how the cognitive linguistics understand this difficult part of the English vocabulary.

## **7. Conclusion**

Once we have exposed all the facts of the object of study, we are capable of reaching some conclusions. First of all, it is necessary to clarify the fact that there are different approaches to teach a new language and the decision of choosing one depends on the professional and the students. Each person requires a different methodology and, obviously, not all students have the same capacity of acquisition. That is why there are a lot of methods that can be used in order to facilitate the comprehension.

Cognitivism is a vast science that includes a lot of domains. Nonetheless, cognitive linguistics has provoked several changes and opinions. The interest in human minds and mental processes is the cause of the numerous wise decisions that we have found throughout the project. Having said that, there are studies that do not agree with it because they explained the learning acquisition with other perspective.

So, bearing this in mind, we could say that the objectives of this project have been achieved and we have exposed certain examples of phrasal verbs with a cognitive explanation. We have tried to make them easy to understand. The explanations are related to the theory in order to be capable of applying the same procedure to all phrasal verbs. As we have explained, we have chosen phrasal verbs with *up* and *down* because, from a personal experience and as it has been proved by linguists, these are one of the commonest particles as parts of phrasal verbs.

We have exposed the differences between both particles and how they are related one to each other. The complementation is one characteristic that helps students to comprehend the senses of a phrasal verb. We have explored the polysemic nature that certain phrasal verbs have and we have provided enough knowledge to be capable of understanding why we have used these particles instead of another ones.

The main point of this project is found in the sixth section where we put into practice all the knowledge that we have collected in order to write this study. Nevertheless, all sections are important to know and understand the role of phrasal verbs in English students and how cognitivism has tried to facilitate the acquisition.

We encourage students and teachers to continue investigating about this topic because it has a lot of aspects that need to be clarified. It is necessary to find a perspective that helps students and teacher to develop our acquisition in such difficult subject. Phrasal verbs are just a minimal step in a long study and we have thought that this approach and the way the meaning is related to our mental processes are the best way of learning new things. We have to explore the variety of facilities and do not desist when the subject is difficult. Once we have understood them, we will want to acquire more.



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